



## COMMITTEE STATEMENT

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**Opening Statement of Rep. Rick Allen (R-GA), Republican Leader  
Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor and Pensions Hearing:  
"Lower Drug Costs Now: Expanding Access to Affordable Health Care"  
May 5, 2021**

(As prepared for delivery)

"When the Trump administration launched Operation Warp Speed in May 2020, they did so with a bold mission: develop a COVID-19 vaccine by the end of the year. Seven months later, health care workers lined up to receive their first dose of the Pfizer vaccine.

To date, over 100 million adults are vaccinated against COVID-19. This life-saving scientific, technological, and logistical feat demonstrates just how powerful, innovative, and effective the American health care system can be.

Unfortunately, many Americans are facing skyrocketing health care costs because of dramatic increases in out-of-pocket costs of prescription drugs. In 2018, patients paid a collective \$61 billion in out-of-pocket drug costs.

Fortunately, Republicans are stepping up with solutions that work best for the people, without the heavy hand of government interference. H.R. 19, the Lower Cost, More Cures Act, introduced last month by Republican committee leaders, is the exact opposite of H.R. 3, Pelosi's big government power grab. The Lower Cost, More Cures Act will utilize the power of the free market to modernize our health care system, increase choice and transparency, and lower costs. These are goals that both sides of the aisle should be able to rally behind.

All the provisions in H.R. 19 are bipartisan, workable, and ready to become law. We have the power to save lives and ease the minds of Americans struggling to pay for needed medications.

Up until 2019, Congressional efforts to lower drug prices for the American people were a collaborative and bipartisan effort. That changed when Speaker Pelosi wrote the Democrats' devastating drug pricing plan, H.R. 3, behind closed doors and without any Republican input.

This year, the Democrats are doubling down on H.R. 3, radical legislation which would have a devastating effect on drug development and innovation in the United States. After the Council of Economic Advisors found that H.R. 3 would lead to 100 fewer drugs entering the marketplace, Republican Leader McCarthy said it best: H.R. 3 is 'a step toward nationalizing the drug industry and opening the door to a one-size-fits-all, government-controlled rationing of prescription drugs.'

Once again, Democrats are pushing far-left politics over policy by rushing through a harmful, partisan bill. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, H.R. 3 would significantly decrease private investment in research and development. Messenger RNA, the technology used to make the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, took billions of dollars of private investment and over three decades to develop. Had this bill been law before the pandemic, the speedy development of the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines would likely not have been possible. Countries around the world are benefitting from this life-saving technology because the Senate refused to pass the Democrats' socialist health care scheme. You'd think that would give my Democrat colleagues pause.

Instead, Democrats are again trying to pass a partisan scheme that would increase our reliance on Chinese medical manufacturing, reduce our capacity for innovation, and devalue people with disabilities and chronic illnesses.

Over half of the Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives support Medicare-for-All, a government-run, single-payer health care system that would cost \$32 trillion and eliminate private insurance, including employer-sponsored coverage, which benefits 159 million Americans and is in the jurisdiction of this Committee. By contrast, 71 percent of Americans say they are satisfied with their employer-sponsored health care coverage. Now, Democrats want to pass this harmful bill to move Americans in employer-sponsored plans to Medicare, bringing us even closer to a socialist single-payer system.

This should be common sense, but kicking Americans off their health care plans will not increase their access to affordable medical care – it will do the opposite.

At the end of the day, H.R. 3 would only lead to fewer treatments and cures, decreased competition in the marketplace, and an increased reliance on Communist China.

Unfortunately, the hearing today is being held to promote this radical scheme. Rather than promote partisan socialist policies such as H.R. 3, I urge my colleagues to work together on finding a bipartisan solution to lowering drug costs, like the common-sense provisions included in H.R. 19.”

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